



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

## **PRESS OFFICE**

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## ***SBA CELEBRATES TWO DECADES OF SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS WITH SBDCs***

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) premier technical assistance program, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) program, marked its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this week by celebrating the more than eight million entrepreneurs it has helped to start or expand their businesses.

**"I truly value the work of the SBDCs in providing services to small business owners and potential entrepreneurs. I want to congratulate the program on its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary,"** SBA Administrator Aida Alvarez said. **"With tailor-made assistance to meet the needs of local communities, the SBDCs have been a tremendous resource for small business. As management and technical assistance providers, they have skillfully evolved to meet the challenges of a new economy."**

There are now 58 small business development centers – at least one in every state, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Through a network of over 1,000 service locations, the SBDCs provide management assistance to current and prospective small business owners. They are essentially one-stop shops for small business assistance, with a wide variety of information and guidance in central and easily accessible branch locations. The program is a cooperative effort of the SBA, the private sector, the educational community, and state and local governments.

In 1977, the SBDC program began as a pilot with eight centers and a total budget of \$390,000. It became a permanent program in 1980. Today, the 1,000 centers are funded through \$82 million in federal appropriations and matching funds from state and local resources.

Small business owners can receive assistance at no charge to assess their readiness to start or expand a business, evaluate their company's existing and potential markets, and develop a marketing plan. The SBDCs leverage their resources by working with professionals in business, industry, government, higher education and trade associations to offer a vast range of workshops, seminars, conferences and courses to the small business entrepreneur.

*To find a local center, visit the SBDC Web site at [www.sba.gov/sbdc](http://www.sba.gov/sbdc).*

*Additional information about SBA's programs and services is available at SBA's Web site: <http://www.sba.gov> or by calling the SBA's Answer Desk at 1-800 U ASK SBA.*

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